

# News from the FPPC

California Fair Political Practices Commission  
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## FPPC Agenda Includes Cost of Living Adjustment For Contribution Limits, “Public Generally” Rules

The Fair Political Practices Commission on Tuesday (November 14) will act on cost of living adjustments for state candidate contribution limits, voluntary expenditure ceilings and public official gift limits. The commission also will act on proposed revisions to a conflict-of-interest exception that can apply when the general public is affected in a similar manner as an officeholder. A number of enforcement cases and other items are also on the November agenda.

The commission’s regular monthly meeting begins at 9:45 a.m. in the FPPC's eighth-floor hearing room at 428 J St. (Fifth and J Streets) in Sacramento.

The Political Reform Act requires the commission to make periodic cost of living adjustments to state candidate contribution limits, state candidate voluntary expenditure ceilings, and gift limits affecting state and local officials. These limits are adjusted every two years and reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index. The new adjustments take effect on January 1, 2007, and remain in place through December 31, 2008.

At Tuesday’s meeting, the commission will consider several regulatory amendments to implement the new dollar amounts. For example, the per person contribution limit for legislative candidates is set to increase from **\$3,300 to \$3,600** per election. The per person contribution limit for gubernatorial candidates will increase **from \$22,300 to \$24,100** per election, and the per person contribution limit for other statewide candidates will increase from **\$5,600 to \$6,000** per election. The calendar year gift limit that applies to public officials is set to increase from the current **\$360 to \$390** per source. All of the new limit amounts are detailed in the FPPC staff memos accompanying the meeting agenda (see agenda items #11 and #12).

The gift limit adjustment does not affect California's \$10 lobbyist gift limit. Under this limit, elected state officials (including members of the legislature) and legislative employees may not accept a gift or gifts totaling more than \$10 in a calendar month from any individual who is registered as a lobbyist under state law. The \$10 limit also applies to gifts received by officials and employees of state agencies if their agency is listed on the registration statement of the lobbyist's employer or firm.

On Tuesday, the commission also will act on proposed changes to the "public generally" exception in the conflict-of-interest provisions of the Political Reform Act.

The Act states that a "public official has a financial interest in a decision... if it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official, a member of his or her immediate family," or on certain of the official's interests. Under this law, an official with a conflict of interest may still be permitted to participate in a governmental decision if the "public generally" exception is met.

The proposed amendments include the identification of factors to be considered in determining whether real properties are financially affected in "substantially the same manner," clarifications to other rule language, and amendments intended to restore a previous "public generally" exception that applies only to small communities (agenda item #10).

The agenda and supporting memoranda and materials are posted on the FPPC's website at [www.fppc.ca.gov](http://www.fppc.ca.gov). Just click on "Agendas" on the left side of the home page and go to "Current Agenda." The agenda is posted on the website 10 days before the meeting, and letters commenting on agenda items are also posted when received.

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